

Message Text

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44

ACTION AF-08

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FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8574

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C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 1592

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINR, BC, RH

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S RETURN TO GABORONE

REF: A) GABORONE 0742; B) GABORONE 1499

1. PRESIDENT KHAMA AND WIFE RETURNED GABORONE 1630 HOURS AUGUST 19 AFTER MONTH-LONG ABSENCE IN CHINA, NORTH KOREA, AND SRI LANKA. AIRPORT WELCOME BY GOB OFFICIALS, DIPLOMATIC CORPS, MOBILE POLICE UNIT COMPANY, BAND, AND 1500 CITIZENS WAS LOUD, ENTHUSIASTIC AND CHOREOGRAPHIC. IN WELCOMING SPEECH, VICE PRESIDENT MASIRE SUMMED UP PREVAILING MOOD BY REFERRING TO PRESIDENT AS RETURNING FATHER LION "AND WE ARE YOUR LITTLE CUBS". HE WISHED KHAMA ANOTHER TEN YEARS IN OFFICE.

2. PRESIDENT'S WELCOME NOTEWORTHY BY CONSPICUOUS NUMBER (ABOUT 30) OF CHINESE EMBREPS AND DEPENDENTS ON HAND. CHINESE REP AND FLOWER GRILS HELPED MEET PRESIDENT AND LAJY KHAMA AT PLANE DOOR. WHILE REST OF DIP CORPS FAR TO THE REAR. TOO, CHINESE CAMERA CREW BUSTLED ABOUT, PROBABLY IN CONJUNCTION WITH MAKING OF CHINESE PRODUCED FILM ON TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE (REF A). MINISTER OF STATE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE, KWELAGOB, ALLEGEDLY KHAMA'S PROTEGE, TURNED OUT IN NEWLY ACQUIRED MAO SUIT TO BLACKSLAP CHINESE REPS.

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3. CHINESE IMPACT SOMEWHAT LESSENER BY FACT THAT GOB OFFICIALS (SAVE FOR KWELAGOB) PAID CHINESE LITTLE HEED DURING LONG WAIT FOR PRESIDENTIAL PLANE. ALSO, PRESIDENT'S RETURN FROM A LENTHY CHINA VISIT MADE SWARMS OF CHINESE AT AIRPORT SOMEWHAT APPROPRIATE, AND PRESIDENT'S ARRIVAL SPEECH CONFINED TO GENERALITIES ON DEVELOPMENT AND DID NOT GO BEYOND A FEW CHINESE ANECDOTES AND EXPRESSION OF REGRET FOR EARTHQUAKE TRAGEDY. FINALLY, IN BRIEF CONVERSATION WITH WIVES OF U.S. AND BRITISH CHARGE'SM POLICE COMMISSIONER HIRSCHFELD (BLACK AFRICA,), WHO HAD ACCOMPANIED PRESIDENT ON CHINESE AND KOREAN LEG OF THE TRIP, SAID THAT AS FAR AS HE WAS CONCERNED, LIFE IN THOSE COUNTRIES WAS LIKE "BEING IN PRISON."

4. MAIN TOPIC IN DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES IS CONTENT OF ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL TREATY WITH CHINESE (REF B. NO ONE HAS ANSWER YET BUT U.K. SUBJECT WORKING IN ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS SPECULATED TO EMBOFF THAT, INASMUCH AS GOVERNMENT LAWYERS WERE NOT CONSULTED, TREATY PROBABLY DEALS MORE WITH GENERALITIES THAN WITH SPECIFIC MAJOR PROJECTS.

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